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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8534
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUCNCAN/ALL CANADIAN POSTS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/22/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [PARM](#) [KCFE](#) [RS](#) [GG](#) [CA](#)
SUBJECT: NATO: CANADA SHARES U.S. VIEW OF NO BUSINESS AS
USUAL AT NRC, PREP COM

REF: A. STATE 100790
[1](#)B. STATE 100758

Classified By: PolMinCouns Scott Bellard, reason 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Canada agrees with the U.S. position that there should be no business as usual at the NATO Russia Council (NRC), and at the NRC Prep Com, and Canada is making this point to its NATO allies. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) On September 22, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAIT) Policy Advisor Robert Bissett expressed appreciation for reftels and told pol/mil officer that Canada "agrees entirely" with the U.S. that NATO members must make a concerted effort to get Russia to meet its obligations under the August 12 Peace Plan. Canada further agrees that engaging the Russians at this time via the NRC, or via the Prep Com, would be counterproductive. Like the U.S., Bissett said, Canada is urging allies to postpone discussion about any future Prep Com meetings at least until after the October 15 Geneva Conference.

[1](#)3. (C/NF) Bissett noted that some European NATO allies have argued that bi-monthly Prep Com meetings are "mandated" by NRC rules of procedure. DFAIT policy experts disagree with this argument, he said, but have asked DFAIT legal staff to weigh in with an opinion. He commented that there is a chance that DFAIT lawyers will decide that the Prep Com meetings are indeed mandated and convince senior policy makers of this need. He wondered aloud, that, if that happens, it might be prudent -- as part of a legal worst case back-up plan -- to be prepared to agree to schedule two pro forma, substantive-less Prep Com meetings on the same, final day of the month.

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